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The Week

MUCH the most interesting passage in Mr. Lloyd George's first contribution to the Sunday edition of the Hearst papers is not his reference to the danger of the permanent military occupation of the Rhineland by France. It is his statement that if France should permanently occupy the Rhineland, its action "would not merely provide an incentive to Germany to renew war but would justify and dignify the attack by converting it into a war of liberation." And he warns the French that in such an event "the sympathies of America and Great Britain will be openly ranged on the side of those who are fighting for national freedom." As usual the French politicians and press have denounced Mr. Lloyd George for misrepresenting their intentions, but his warning was timely and necessary. The present French government is almost certainly bluffing. It is trying to terrorize both Germany and its former Allies to assure France a politically and economically privileged position in the European system. The answer to its demands is not to humor them, as so many well-intentioned people insist, but firmly to deny them. France should have been informed long ago that her grievances, considerable as they are, do not justify her in erecting her own title to security into an excuse for an attack on German liberties and upon the peace of Europe. We sincerely trust that the Bonar Law government will follow the advice given by Mr. John Maynard Keynes and unite with generous proposals about reparations and war debts a firm declaration that, if M. Poincaré does make good his threats of violence, the British government would "not be content with passive protest but would invite to joint consultation the leading governments of the world." If the American government could not participate in such a consultation, it should publicly and emphatically declare its sympathy with the British revolt against French terrorism.

SECRETARY MELLON may be right, financially, in his view that the super-tax ought to be reduced. Every income tax tempts evasion and the higher the tax the more serious the problem. But politically Secretary Mellon is all wrong. The country is not in the least disposed to lighten the burdens of the rich. And that is what reducing the super-tax looks like. That, moreover, is what it is. Secretary Mellon assumes that the rich will be so much less disposed to evade the tax, lawfully or unlawfully, that their aggregate payments to the Treasury will be greater under the lower rates. His argument does not, however, carry conviction. If he had desired to make his plan acceptable to progressive sentiment he should have proposed additional taxes which would reach the same class and offset the relief given by the reduction in the super-tax. Increased inheritance taxes and a restoration of the excess profits tax would be a fair exchange for the higher percentages of the super-tax.

THE difficulty of collecting the income tax offers a needed reminder of the folly of our wartime fiscal legislation. We knew at the time that the cost of modern war is too colossal to be covered by any peace-time expedient. What the case de-

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manded was the conscription of wealth as well as man power. We should have distributed the expenses of the war among the property holders on a stiffly graduated scale. The nation would then have had no war debt, and the collective property owners would by this time have made great strides toward disburdening themselves, through savings or liquidation, of the charges assessed upon them. There would have been no problem of evasion once the distribution had been made, since nothing but a bona fide bankruptcy could afford an avenue of escape from the levy. Next time—if there must be a next time—we shall assess the war costs directly upon the men who have property. And if the prospect is not pleasing to the propertied classes, they know what they can do about it. They can start right now to be conscientious objectors to war and to all the policies that lead to war.

EXEMPTION of any kind of income from taxation is wrong in principle. It works to create a class of income recipients who have no direct concern with the fiscal policy of the government. Taxes may rise or fall: it is all one to them. In theory, to be sure, they pay for the privilege what it is worth. They accept a smaller income than they might otherwise command. In theory the tax free nobles and clergy of the ancient régime in France had paid for their privileges. Nevertheless those privileges became so onerous in time that they represented one of the chief objects of revolutionary attack. In the United States the tax free privilege presents a vice peculiar to our form of government. The investor buys his tax free privilege from the states; the loss of revenue falls to the federal government. The case for a constitutional amendment limiting the states' right to grant tax exemption is a strong one.

PRESIDENT HARDING in one of his recent talks with the Washington correspondents went out of his way to defend the long interval which elapses between the election of a new Congress and its first session. He considered it expedient to give the voters and their constituents time to cool off before providing them with an opportunity of translating their campaign talk into action. This defence of the existing law and practice is reminiscent of the kinds of objection to democracy which the political psychologists of the eighteenth century used to flourish. The dangers of democracy rarely arise from a prevailing disposition on the part of the voters to explode in foolish and hot-headed behavior. They arise rather from the disposition of the voters to accept lethargically the many unnecessary but familiar abuses and misfits in the institutions and public policies of their countries. Mr. Harding's attitude towards this obvious and reasonable reform seems to be dictated by the momentary exigencies of his own personal policy. He is forcing through the surviving Congress a ship subsidy bill which the next Congress—which is actually more nearly representative of existing public opinion—would infallibly reject. It is he who needs to slow down, not the voters and their new representatives.

ON December 18th hearings will be held before the Committee on Banking and Currency on a bill which, if it could become a law, would work more effectively toward economic justice and practical stability than any other measure that has been proposed in decades. We refer to Congressman Goldsborough's bill "to Stabilize the Purchasing Power of Money." The method it applies is well known through the works of Professor Irving Fisher. Vary at need the metal content of the "gold dollar" in the reserves on which the currency is based. When prices measured in gold rise, increase the gold in the "dollar" proportionately; when prices fall, reduce it. By this plan a hundred dollars in currency would command approximately the same volume of the necessities of life, from month to month and from decade to decade. It would establish increased security and definiteness for all financial transactions extending over a period of time. In buying life insurance, for example, one would know that his dependents would actually secure the purchasing power requisite to decent living. As matters stand now no one can tell what the fluctuations in prices may do to the money benefits he contracts for. Most important of all, the plan would do away with the friction between employers and employees that always attends great changes in the price level. Most strikes are called either to force up wages when prices rise, or to resist wages cutting when prices fall. They are the direct product of a defect in our monetary system for which Mr. Goldsborough's bill offers a radical cure.

DEMILITARIZATION of the Dardanelles has a pacific sound, but it is quite possible that a future war lurks in it. Demilitarized or not, the Straits are free to all commercial vessels in peacetime. The issue concerns only war, and even in war only Russia and the Western naval powers; Russia defensively and the Western powers offensively. If the Straits were effectively closed to war vessels Russia would need no fleet in the Black Sea, nor would she need to fortify the coast cities. She would be as safe from attack as we are with our

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command of the approaches to the Gulf of Mexico. If the Straits remain open, any Western naval power can attack Russia where she is most vulnerable. It goes without saying that no government of Russia, communistic, republican or monarchist will endure such a menace indefinitely. Sooner or later the Imperial Russian ambition for the control of the Straits will reassert itself. If the Allies are sincerely desirous of peace in the Near East they ought to seek a less provocative formula for the disposition of the Straits.

UNTIL we have details of the kind that never get on the cables, it will be too early to reach any large conclusions about the capture of Tsingtao and surrounding territory by Chinese bandits just as the Japanese were about to evacuate. The coincidence of foray and impending evacuation is the point of the affair, and it may not be entirely coincidence. The details may reveal that the bandits had long enjoyed immunity under Japanese protection and that they were equipped with Japanese arms. Two years ago that would have been the inescapable conclusion. Such was the regular Japanese procedure whenever about to evacuate under pressure territory Japan was illegally occupying. Then the government could say that only Japanese troops could maintain order. The apparent change in Japan's attitude, as shown in Siberia and Shantung, militates against such a conclusion now. In both places Japan seems to have lived up to her pledges in spirit as well as letter and there may be injustice in imputing sinister motives.

THE arms incident in Siberia, however, gives ground for doubt. The Japanese did clear out of Siberia, but just as they were leaving it was disclosed that a large supply of arms, held over from the inter-Allied expedition, had been slipped out of Vladivostok, some going to the White Guards and some to Chang Tso-lin in Mukden. The latter is Japan's dummy in Manchuria and has acted before as intermediary between the Japanese military and reactionary Russians in Japanese pay. If there are any of the latter left who have not had their fill of counter-revolutions under Japanese auspices they will have a storehouse from which to draw supplies. In answer to Japanese public indignation, the War Office has made a lame explanation, blaming the wrongful disposal of the arms on a minor staff officer, one Major Hara. How a single officer of low rank could make away with a huge quantity of munitions undetected was not explained, but Major Hara came forward manfully with a confession, was court-martialed, sentenced to two years' imprisonment and sentence suspended. This is not the first time that a subordinate officer has consented to act as scapegoat in the name of patriotism, as the Japanese General Staff sees patriotism, and nobody in Japan pretends to be deceived. Coming after the Siberian incident, the Tsingtao bandit raid has all the appearances of a parallel. The Japanese may be evacuating both Shantung and Siberia with reservations. Healthy as are all the latest signs in Japan, it is too early to say more than that while the militarists sit less easily in the saddle they are far from unhorsed.

THOSE of us who have declared ourselves friends of the Irish Free State have had this friendship put to a severe test. The execution—why not call it murder?—of O'Connor, McKelvey, Mellowes and Barrett as a reprisal for the murder—or assassination—of Deputy Sean Hales shakes one's faith in the Free State government. President Cosgrove's explanation and justification of the killings is bloody and vindictive talk. Terror will be met with terror. The decision was taken "not in anger but after the coldest of cold discussion." One wonders if the decision was not affected by fear, one sees no reason why this fear should not grow, nor anything to prevent the ratio of four dead men for one dead man being increased. Does the Free State government, because it is attacked by what Mr. Mulcahy, the Minister of Defence, calls "forces more vicious and insidious than Britain had ever employed" feel justified in making reprisals crueller than any made by the British?

Pierce Butler and the Rule of Reason

PRESIDENT HARDING is not himself a stupid man, but in appointing Mr. Pierce Butler an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, he has perpetrated from his own conservative point of view an extraordinarily stupid mistake. He has jeopardized in the minds of a large and increasing body of his fellow countrymen the good faith of an institution which is for many reasons peculiarly dependent for its sufficient functioning upon general popular confidence. He has jeopardized it so flagrantly and yet so unnecessarily that sheer stupidity is the kindest explanation of the mistake. He simply does not and cannot understand what has happened and is threatening to happen to the traditional distribution of economic and sectional power in American life. He does not understand how essential a moderate and statesmanlike Supreme Court is to prevent the redistri-

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bution of economic and social power from becoming an occasion for violence or a provocation of it. If the President, his associates and successors continue to commit such serious mistakes, they will in the end provide an excuse, on the part of the sections and classes, which are suffering from the existing distribution of economic power and are denied the legal method of changing it, for the very appeal to force which all sensible and humane people are most anxious to avoid.

The Supreme Court divides with the executive and legislative branches of the government the responsibility of actually exercising the sovereignty which is legally and morally vested in the whole American people. It does not itself initiate government, but it is supposed to prevent legislatures and administrators from forgetting the necessary and desirable limitations of their authority. It is the balance wheel of the Constitution as an operative mechanism, and as the balance of the American social and economic body is at present dependent upon the persistence of balance in the operation of the Constitution, its part in preserving the morale of American government is decisive and preponderant. The Constitution sets up a most delicate and complicated system of state and federal political instruments, and it defines and elaborates an even more complicated and overwrought system of state and popular rights. The automatic articulation of these instruments one with another is impossible. They need a special organ of mutual adjustment. It is no less impossible to prevent the governmental instruments from encroaching on the reserved rights of the states or the people without bringing in a court of ultimate decision from whose opinion there shall be no appeal. The Supreme Court is intended to be the conscience and the reason of the American body politic, but a conscience and a reason which is only called in to arbitrate or adjust ultimate conflicts among the more active, special and responsive members of the political body.

The setting up of a committee of men whose opinions upon questions involving the exercise of governmental power and the welfare of millions of people are supposed to be ultimate is the most distinctive and perhaps the most valuable feature of American government. No other sovereign power except the American people has ever voluntarily divided up its sovereignty and allowed such a large fraction of it to be exercised by a group of citizens who are responsible only to the precedents of their predecessors, to a necessarily ambiguous body of law and to the partially arbitrary dictates of their own conscience and reason. This group of men are as completely free from direct popular control as it is possible to free them in a democracy. Yet they are allowed to declare what in practice the sovereign democracy may and may not do; and in many conceivable cases the only way in which a very considerable majority of the people in the democracy can overcome one of their vetoes would be by discharging them and refusing to obey their orders. Obviously it is of the utmost importance that the justices of the Supreme Court, in addition to being learned and enlightened lawyers, should also be reasonable, statesmanlike men — the kind of men who are, whenever possible, ready to construe the principles and truths embodied in the American Constitution in the light of the living ideals and the practical necessities of an evolving American society. They are the custodians not only of the ark of the Constitution but also of the confidence and the welfare of their fellow-countrymen. It would be a gross betrayal of trust if the Supreme Court should reward the consent which the American people have bestowed upon the institution and the faith which they have reposed in the Court itself by using a warped or doubtful interpretation of the Constitution to prevent a persistent popular majority from undertaking some promising experiment in the redistribution of economic power.

The appointment of Mr. Pierce Butler is a piece of crass stupidity, because he is the kind of man who would assuredly use a warped or doubtful interpretation of a phrase in the Constitution to prevent needed experiments in economics and government. The testimony against him in this respect is conclusive. As Regent of the University of Minnesota he behaved during and after the war in the manner of a blind and bumptious bigot. He had none of the tolerance, none of the good humor and worldly wisdom, none of the mere gentlemanly decency which would prevent him from treating learned men, whose only offence was the expression of opinions different from his own, as suspects and traitors. He did not even show that respect for orderly process and that scrupulous desire to give an accused man his day in court which is supposed to belong to the spirit of Anglo-American law. President Harding has placed a man who has not scrupled to suppress opinions by the use of violence in the one position in which violence of disposition, even when placed at the disposal of a sound judgment, can do the maximum damage; and he has placed Mr. Butler there in spite of the opposition of the fellow-townsmen who know him best and have had reason to dread his intolerant and headstrong disposition. A Supreme Court composed of justices of that description could not administer rules of

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law which were also rules of reasonable political adjustment. As well ask some clerical heresy-hound to sit on a commission to adjust the Athanasian Creed to the requirements of modern science.

The New Republic protests against Mr. Pierce Butler's appointment not because we dislike and disbelieve in the preservation by the Supreme Court of its existing political functions but because we believe in them and would much prefer to see them continued. The Supreme Court has, we think, frequently abused the discretion which under our existing practice it exercises in reviewing legislation. It has repeatedly declared invalid by the narrow margin of one or two votes state or federal statutes whose unconstitutionality was at least extremely questionable. But the exercise of that power by some branch of the government is essential to the operation of a system of checks, balances and rights, such as the American fabric of government is, and we would rather see it exercised by a court than by the federal legislature. If the judicial review of legislation is abandoned, the American people will abandon an ingredient of unique value in their own polity and in their own human relationship to that polity. They will abandon an institution which is intended to submit important controversies, after they have been fought out in other regions of government, finally to the rule of reason derived from accepted formulations of political truth. The abandonment of the existing rule of reason, unreasonable as its expressions sometimes are, will render them much more exposed to the substitution for the rule of something resembling reason the rule of something resembling violence. We trust they will not have to adopt the revolutionary expedient of putting congressional in the place of judicial interpretation of the Constitution, but adopt it they will, if the Supreme Court is to be packed with Pierce Butlers. For in the hands of warped men of this kind the Court will itself deny the rule of reason. It will become a medium of obscurantism, immobility and implicit violence rather than of enlightenment, progress and constructive consent.

The Meaning of the Message

A PRESIDENT'S message may mean much or little. What a strong President, working in close cooperation with the legislative branch, may have to say will be scrutinized closely by every citizen. His message offers a rough forecast of the course of legislation. Mr. Harding is not a strong President, and his relations with Congress have never been those of effective cooperation. Only by accident will any of his recommendations even receive serious consideration. As a public document his message means nothing at all.

Nevertheless, the message is worth close study. What the President has to say in his message after a great upheaval like the last election is significant from the point of view of party politics. When the nature of the election results became known, everybody wanted to know what effect they would exert on the President and the group, in the Cabinet and outside of it, upon which he depends for suggestion and advice. Would the administration try to readjust itself to the new conditions and to assert leadership of the new forces released by the election? Or would it assume that the progressive victories represented only a momentary aberration from traditional principles, a passing storm best weathered by remaining below the deck? Is Harding going to attempt a compromise which will hold the Eastern and Western wings of the party together, or will he permit the lines of division to be more deeply drawn, with the inevitable result of a serious struggle in the Convention, of a possible bolt and the formation of a new party?

The message goes a long way toward answering these questions. All through it there runs a refrain of stand-pattism. We are prospering pretty well, as matters are. We're not through our post-war readjustments, and we still suffer from the fact that "everyone, speaking broadly, craves readjustment for everybody but himself." This is apparently a covert allusion to the fact that labor has not accepted deflation in the spirit that the President and Mr. Mellon could have commended. We should be doing much better than we are if it had not been for the railway and coal strikes, "which had no excuse for their beginning, and less justification for their delayed settlement." The only suggestion the President is able to offer is the old one of compulsory arbitration by an impartial tribunal representing the public alone, instead of a body like the Railway Labor Board giving representation to the parties at interest. Certainly Mr. Harding does not advance far toward progressive leadership with a program like that.

Neither does he make progress by his handling of the immigration problem. To him it is not an industrial problem at all, but a problem of bolshevism and illiteracy. By some process of reasoning we cannot follow, Mr. Harding convinces himself that aliens would be drawn toward literacy and Americanism if they could only be registered and kept continually under the government's

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eye. The President is clearly unaware of the fact that outside of the Washington office of Mr. Daugherty the alien panic has subsided and cannot possibly be revived for the support of anything so un-American as the registration plan and its administrative implications.

In his discussion of the railway problem Mr. Harding supposes, no doubt, that he is holding out an olive branch to the progressives. The progressive West demands a reduction in rates, and Mr. Harding agrees that they ought to be reduced. But every proposal he makes for preparing the way for reduction looks to increasing the profits of the railways, first of all. They ought to be grouped into more economical systems; they ought to pool their freight cars. All that is good sense, no doubt. But the most striking item in the President's recommendations is the elimination of motor competition with the railroads. We invite Secretary Wallace to make this recommendation acceptable to the farmers, who have found in the motor truck one means of escaping railway rates which, whether reasonable or not in themselves, drain all the blood out of the farmer.

There are, it is true, two progressive patches in the message. One, which we are inclined to attribute to Secretary Wallace, deals with the subject of rural credits. It admits the desirability of providing for more liberal land credits as well as for production credits. In their present distress the farmers want something more than that. They are thinking of credits as a means of holding their wheat and corn, cotton and tobacco, for higher prices. In other words, the kernel of the farmers' demand for credit is the project of valorization. President Harding is offering them the shell, and he will find them duly grateful.

The other progressive patch we may attribute to Mr. Hoover. It consists of the super-power project, with the promise of industrial efficiency and lower cost. Economically the project is sound and significant. Politically it is valueless, because neither progressives nor conservatives are thinking now in super-power terms. Two years ago the project might have struck fire. Two years ago the sedate comments on foreign policy might have borne a political meaning. Today they simply make men nod.

If the Republican party hangs together, it will by virtue of some force other than that exhibited by the President and the group surrounding him. So much the message makes clear. There is no resilience in Mr. Harding and his advisers. They have no capacity whatever of readjusting themselves to the conditions of the day. They are an incubus which the party will have to rid itself of, even, if necessary, at the cost of diving under the waters of defeat.

Mr. Justice Holmes

ON December 15, 1882, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., became an Associate Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. Twenty years later, on December 8, 1902, he took his seat on the United States Supreme Court. The soldier's faith, the faith he lived in war and lives in peace, he has described as "having known great things, to be content with silence." But for us, for whom the "great things" are still being wrought by the Justice—we cannot be content with silence. And so the New Republic also wishes to mark the anniversary of forty years of judicial service, and twenty years of Mr. Justice Holmes with rejoicing and with gratitude. "We live by symbols"; and the judicial work of Mr. Justice Holmes is the symbol at once of the promise and the fulfillment of the American judiciary.

With myriad variations his great juristic patterns have been woven. The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience. The Constitution is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. In these aperçus we have the clues to his two thousand odd opinions, "samples of his best," long since acclaimed by the world's juristic masters as work done in the grand manner and nobly done. The conflict between the nation and the states, between liberty and authority—these are the themes that have solicited his judgment. He has been vigilant for the Union, for which he fought at Ball's Bluff and Antietam and Fredericksburg; and equally watchful of needed scope for the states, upon which the Union rests. His opinion in the first Child Labor case vindicates the basis of federal power as only his eloquence can illuminate, while his brief opinion in Truax v. Corrigan is a massive warning against straight-jacketing the states, in dealing with their local problems, through pedantic and partisan reading of the Fourteenth Amendment. To be sure, these are dissenting opinions, as are some of his greatest utterances—but they are dissents that shape history and record prophecy.

He has found the Constitution equal to the needs of a great nation at war and devoid of obstacles to beneficent treaties with other nations. But, according to the same Constitution, the individual must not be sacrificed to the Moloch of fear; there is a sanctuary in law even for those outlawed by prevalent opinion:

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> when men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes can safely be carried out.

Serenely dwelling above the passing shibboleths, he has steadfastly refused to lower his ear so as to catch the murmur of the moment. But he is too much compounded of humility and humor to regard even the highest tribunal as a Grand Lama. The Supreme Court, too, like all human institutions, must earn reverence through the test of truth.

To Mr. Justice Holmes it is literally true that "law is a seamless webb"; for him the "webb" is life. His gallantry and gayety, his faith and doubt, his passionate dream of spiritual reign, the solitude of the thinker, the bounty and the splendor of his tenderness—of all these and of his very self his opinions, however "formal" the appearance and "technical" the question, are the vehicle. Occasionally he has allowed us to share his intimate glimpses. Behind the sceptic is invincible faith:

> And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace.
>
> The other day my dream was pictured to my mind. It was evening. I was walking homeward on Pennsylvania Avenue near the Treasury, and as I looked beyond Sherman's statue to the west the sky was aflame with scarlet and crimson from the setting sun. But, like the note of downfall in Wagner's opera, below the skyline there came from little globes the pallid discord of the electric lights, and I thought to myself the Götterdämmerung will end, and from those globes clustered like evil eggs will come the new masters of the sky. It is like the time in which we live. But then I remembered the faith that I partly have expressed, faith in a universe not measured by our fears, a universe that has thought and more than thought inside of it, and as I gazed, after the sunset and above the electric lights there shone the stars.

And ours still the glory of his labor, still ours the music of his dream.

Those Stock Dividends

HARDLY a day passes in which the financial columns fail to report the cutting of a melon by one corporation or another. A stock dividend of one hundred percent is common and two hundred percent is by no means unknown. Nobody is surprised, any longer, by such distribution of securities. But some millions of energetic Americans are indignant. Nor does the indignation work itself off with repetition of the doses of toxin. On the contrary the effect on public opinion is like that of a cumulative poison. We are likely to observe important symptoms when the question of the revenues comes up in Congress.

To most financial writers there seems to be nothing in the issue of stock dividends that is of any concern to persons outside of the issuing corporations. The shareholders in Secretary Mellon's Gulf Oil own all the physical property and franchises and good will of the company. They own all the profits; and these are not limited by law to any fixed percentage on capital. What difference does it make, then, that the company issued a 200 percent stock dividend? Every shareholder has three shares now where he had one before, but the three represent exactly the same property, the same claim on profits, that the one formerly represented. They may sell for more in the market, but that is because the market is full of delusions. And if the buyers and sellers of shares choose to be affected by delusions, that is no matter of grave public concern.

That is the argument. What is wrong with it? Simply this, that if not in the actual melon cutting, at any rate in the process of preparing for it frauds may be practised upon the small investor and upon the public revenue. Corporation law leaves to the directors of a company within wide limits discretionary power over the annual earnings. The directors decide how much of these earnings shall be paid out in dividends and how much shall be carried to surplus. They decide, too, what shall be done with the surplus, whether it shall be carried as a liquid reserve or put back into the business to swell future earnings. The small investor may note that the item of surplus is growing year by year. He knows that sooner or later this condition must result in an increase in dividends or in an issue of new shares gratis. But only the insiders could have surmised that such issues would be made at the close of 1922 after a year of depression. The small investor valued his share on the basis of actual dividends, with some slight addition for his rights in the growing surplus. The insider could bid for shares with certain knowledge of an approaching stock dividend. Perhaps he refrained from taking advantage of the situation. But the probabilities are that he did not refrain altogether, and that the process of concentration of holdings was accelerated.

Just now, however, what most arouses the public against stock dividends is the belief that the public revenue is somehow defrauded. Is it? Let us posit a case. A certain company has been pursuing a

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policy of surplus accumulation through a number of years. It has paid, we will assume, corporation taxes on all its net earnings, including the part set aside for surplus. It paid excess profits taxes so long as such taxes were levied, and the increased corporation taxes ever since the excess profits tax was abolished. It might of course have evaded part of its taxes by juggling its depreciation and replacement accounts, thus slipping in a number of improvements that enhanced the value of its property. No doubt many corporations have done that. But it is probably fair to assume that most corporations have reported their earnings honestly, and paid the taxes due on them. This would not have made it impracticable for them to build up their surpluses in preparation for melon cutting.

Where, then, is the fraud on the revenue? Every dollar of earnings distributed in dividends is taxed twice. The corporation has paid one tax on it and the recipient pays an income tax besides. As a rule he pays at a high rate under our income tax law because corporation dividends are the characteristic constituent of large incomes, amounting in 1917 to fifty percent or more of all incomes over $60,000. Every dollar carried to surplus and later represented by a stock dividend is taxed only once. To this extent, at least, the revenue is defrauded.

But is the revenue really defrauded, or are its claims merely postponed? The carrying of corporation earnings to surplus means simply their reinvestment, and sooner or later they will yield income that must be distributed to the stockholders and so become subject to income tax. Thus the surplus pays the tax twice in the end. If we accept this reasoning we shall have to amend our earlier statement to say that the earnings distributed in dividends may be taxed not only twice but three times. First, the corporation tax; then the income tax; then, if any part of the income is saved and invested, income tax on its earnings. The practice of accumulating surpluses and distributing title to the increased investment by stock dividends does unquestionably abort one tax paying stage out of either two or three. Whether it is intentionally designed to do so or not it robs the revenue. How great the sum of such evasions may be we have no means of calculating. But we surmise that it runs into the hundreds of millions.

For this condition three remedies have been proposed:

(1) Tax stock dividends as if they were income. (2) Prohibit the accumulation of surpluses beyond such as may be required to insure a steady dividend policy, and prohibit absolutely the issue of stock dividends. (3) Levy on sums carried to surplus, in addition to the ordinary tax on corporate incomes, a tax representing the estimated income tax that would have been received if the sums in question had been distributed as income.

Of these remedies the first, in many ways the simplest, is put out of the question by the Supreme Court decision that stock dividends are not income. The second is objectionable because it limits too severely the freedom of action of corporate managements. It is often to the advantage of the general public as well as of the corporation that part of the earnings should be reinvested in extensions and improvements before the shareholders get a chance to dissipate it. The third remedy appears on the whole the most practical, even though it would work only by approximations and averages. What income tax rate do dividends pay, on the average? Twenty-five percent? Then let each year's contribution to surplus pay a special tax of twenty-five percent.

There is, indeed, in the existing law a punitive tax on evasive surpluses. With greater zeal on the part of the Treasury recent surplus accumulations might not have been so abundant. However the case may stand, there is no question at all that under the existing law and its administration the Treasury fails to secure many millions of dollars that are its due according to the spirit of our revenue system. The stock dividend melons are proof of the fact. And we think that the progressives in both Houses will not rest content until this condition has been corrected, and drastically.

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La Follette

A CLOSE parallel to the come-back of Ramsay MacDonald, pacifist and outcast in Great Britain during the war, as leader of the Opposition in Commons, is presented by the spectacle of Senator La Follette. He was the nearest approach to an avowed, thorough-going pacifist that American national politics developed in 1917 and 1918. And he now has the leadership of a group in American politics that corresponds in many ways to the British Labor party. In fact, it might be said that he is the nearest thing we have to a leader of a real opposition, for it could fairly be argued that in its present state the Democratic party is not so much an opposition to the Republican administration as an obstruction and a conventional alternative. Surely it is true that the real pacemaker of the opposition to the Harding administration is not the regular Democratic opposition, but the group of more or less radical men of both Republican and Democratic parties—mostly of the Republican—of whom La Follette has become the leader.

There is no doubt of the fact of his leadership, notwithstanding the moral and intellectual preeminence of Senator Borah in the ranks of the new group. Borah can do far more than La Follette to bring support to the group from people who are still trying to find their political path. But he cannot, at least he will not, do as much to weld this group into an effective parliamentary unit. And La Follette is the leader notwithstanding the sweet-faced humility with which he thrust aside the sceptre and the crown in the conference of the group, in and out of Congress, that was held in Washington on December 1st and 2nd.

By that gesture La Follette revealed the political shrewdness which anyone who had stopped to think about his career would have expected of him. Even if he had no other purpose than to serve personal ambition and self-glorification, if he cared not at all for the success of the projects to which in a broad way the progressives and radicals are committed, then that gesture was a sound and natural one. In making it, he allayed whatever human jealousy might have been in Borah's heart, and at the same time he conformed to Borah's honest judgment that the ends he has in view are more likely to be attained if the new group devotes itself to concrete matters of legislation and avoids entangling itself in personal ambitions and in political projects such as ambitious schemes for a hurry-up third party.

Of the new organization, with its steering committee in each branch of Congress, its general advisory committee, and its proposed special committees to deal with specific legislation, La Follette is undoubtedly what an old line Republican boss of somewhat grandiloquent tastes used to call himself—the "managing mind." He sat in the centre of things in the Washington conferences, and the wires ran out from him and back to him. He is still sitting there. Besides, he will command more votes that count on a roll-call in both House and Senate, votes he can depend upon absolutely, than any other man in the group; he may even command more votes than all the others put together.

This new position of La Follette's is certainly fully as interesting, fully as significant of the revolution of feeling as is the contrast between the outcast Ramsay MacDonald of war days, and the leader of "his Majesty's opposition." It is less than four years since the Republicans grudgingly received La Follette back into the fold. After the 1918 elections, with all possible votes assembled, the Republicans had a majority of one in the Senate. That opened the door for La Follette. The majority of one has permitted the friends of this, that or the other Senator to say that he was instrumental in organizing the Senate in 1919. The truth is that only two men can claim to have been pivotal. They are La Follette and Newberry. La Follette had little more place in the Republican party than in the Democratic. Newberry had no place in the Senate. He was there instead of Henry Ford through a political miscarriage caused by money. It was by their ability to get those two to whom they were not entitled that the Republicans achieved success. And, it is worth while to note in passing, that, for widely different reasons, the two have become like curses laid heavily upon the Republican machine. The Democrats might call this retribution.

Even after he had been received back into the Republican fold, La Follette had a dubious status. His war course and his pre-war course had been, if anything, more at variance with the orthodox Republican course than with the Democratic. Between 1915 and 1917, Roosevelt, Lodge and others had gone far toward making the Republican party the war party, while Wilson was seeking to escape war, and was being called womanish. Accepted again as a Republican because the Republicans sorely needed him, La Follette's status was something like that of a daughter who had strayed from

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the path of virtue, but had been restored to a place in the family circle because the family was in straits and needed help with the housework. He was given a kind word occasionally in those 1919 days, and the Senators used to call him "Bob," but the old line leaders were half ashamed of it, especially in the presence of Democrats. John Walter Smith, who was an Old Guard Democratic Senator from Maryland at the time, was a friend of Penrose's. One day he met Penrose in the lobby. He was about half as tall as the giant. Throwing his head back to peer up into Penrose's face, he asked in his most unctuous voice: "Penrose, how is 'Bob'?" Penrose shot a glance into Smith's mock serious eyes, growled "You go to hell, Smith," and lumbered away.

In the really terrible ordeal to which John Sharp Williams subjected La Follette during the expulsion proceedings against him—based on his St. Paul speech—which were finally quashed, no Republican stirred in his behalf. According to his custom, Williams drifted into the Senate about four o'clock on the day that the proceedings against La Follette were dismissed. At the door, he asked what was happening, and was told. He walked carelessly to the seat nearest the centre aisle in the front row on the Democratic side. La Follette has the corresponding seat on the Republican side, and was in it. Williams, one of the most thoroughly honest and most thoroughly courageous men in the Senate, thought La Follette's St. Paul speech was disloyal and traitorous, and he thought a speech having those qualities, delivered at the time it was delivered, was the blackest sin. He said so with all the devastating power that is peculiarly his, multiplied in effect by his transparent sincerity. The Senate sat like graven images in the silence of death while Williams's voice, an odd mingling of rasp and music, rose and fell. La Follette, a courageous man, else he had not been there that day, sank deep into his seat, while his face became a mass of ashen cords. When Williams had finished, having contemptuously said that he had "no personal animosity against the man," he turned and indifferently walked into the Democratic cloakroom. The Republican Senators watched him disappear without moving a muscle. Finally, Lodge walked to La Follette's seat, leaned awkwardly over, and said something, as though advising that no reply be made. La Follette jerkily nodded in acquiescence.

In the months that followed that ordeal and the Republicans' shamefaced restoration of him to party standing, he spent many, many hours sitting in that aisle seat in the front Republican row, staring at the presiding officer. He gave the same attention to that officer, whether he was the Democratic Vice President Marshall, the Republican Vice President Coolidge, the president pro tem, Senator Cummins, or some preternaturally grave Senator called to the chair as a stop-gap. Now and again he made a long speech. He is given to long speeches. Sometimes he took part in a filibuster and talked indefinitely. Scant attention was given these efforts, although sometimes when he talked on economic questions there was more material and careful argument than in any other speech in the debate. What he said did not matter. He was La Follette. The Senate and the press gallery alike were nearly empty.

An odd picture he made in those days. This man who appeals directly to the horny handed son of toil on the farm and in the factory is the most fastidious dresser in the Senate. He clothes his little body perfectly. His feet are shod as daintily as a woman's. A reproduction of his shoes and brown spats would serve excellently to illustrate an advertisement. His black morning coat and his gray trousers are the ultimate in cut and texture. As the late winter wanes, he appoints himself a harbinger of spring, changing the black and gray for something fawn-colored of equal merit. And always the Piccadilly collar and the cravat convey a subdued elegance. Crowning the heavy head is the mass of upstanding hair, the famous pompadour, plainly the object of affectionate, even vain attention. Between that mass of hair and that fastidiously clothed little body, there was in those days a face so lined with strife and worry as to be almost corrugated; a tense, glowering face; the face of a man terribly bitten in spirit, and terribly rebellious, and yet intensely determined to make, by word or deed, no plea for sympathy. When some Senator strolled by his seat and stopped for a casual word, usually manifesting restraint in his bearing, La Follette always replied with punctilious courtesy—and briefly, and with a hint of sardonic understanding in his face.

At the Republican National Convention of 1920, he was still an outcast. His perennial candidacy for the Presidential nomination, first made futile in the day of Roosevelt's supremacy, was an object of gay ridicule to the Old Guard, conscious of power and of impending victory. A few weeks later various radical groups united in Chicago in the Farmer-Labor party, and invited La Follette to be their Presidential candidate. The event was not worth as much in most newspapers as a popular traffic policeman's departure on vacation. After Mr. Harding took office, it was unofficially announced that steps were to be taken to rid the Republican party of La Follette. Senator Lenroot

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was given the federal patronage in Wisconsin, and every other conceivable form of support. In time, a candidate was presented against La Follette for renomination, and the movement was taken seriously in the East. La Follette was a joke and a nuisance, sometimes more a joke than a nuisance, sometimes more a nuisance than a joke.

And now he is back in Washington, with the prestige of an incredible majority in Wisconsin, with the prestige of controlling more votes, in the Senate and in the House, than any other single individual; and with the prestige of leadership of an organization—within the organizations of the two old parties—of enough potential power to have profoundly stirred the administration. Moreover—and this is significant—there are men in the movement headed by La Follette who were soldiers in the war, and there are others who were at the opposite pole to La Follette in their ideas about the war.

La Follette's face no longer is at odds with his hair and his clothes. It is a smooth and shining countenance, meet for the pompadour and all the rest. No one knows better than La Follette that he has come back. No one appreciates as La Follette does what that means to La Follette. No one is more roseate than La Follette in dreams of what may be; and in these fluid times dreams may go far afield. Still, remembering the bad luck that so often has dogged him, I wonder if there was an omen in the first thing that happened after he returned to Washington for the special session of Congress. He prepared himself for a four-hour war dance in the centre of the Senate around the political carcass of Senator Newberry. And Newberry up and resigned on him.

JOHN W. OWENS.

Judgment

I wish my ghost might serve as juryman,
One of a passive body come to hear
The cause of Life—the fruit against the plan—
Plead by the living, could they but speak clear.
There would be murky tales, grim case on case,
A witness here would show his heart of gall,
And Beauty would look out with starry face,
And Pain would sit secure against the wall.

I wonder then, if I being free and done
With agony and sweat, should cast my vote
For Life—remembering passion and the sun
On warming clay, the spring wind at my throat;
Or if I'd look at Pain and wink an eye
And of an old grudge, vote to let Life die?

HORTENSE FLEXNER.

The Mantle of the Prophet

QUARTERED in an army barracks on the isle of Malta, so fearful of assassination that the skylight in his mess-room must be boarded up with planks, the tired man who just stopped being Sultan looks out upon a world in ruins. In swift succession came the announcement from a "National Assembly" at Angora that Mohammed IV had been deposed; then the decision to break up the temporal and spiritual powers that had hitherto been linked together; and finally the Sultan's own sudden flight to refuge aboard a battleship that flew the Union Jack. Presumably he is safe enough today, in Malta. But how about the British?

Mohammed IV is broken, tired, ill. I talked with him one afternoon, two months before his flight. He spoke slowly, puzzling for the words he wanted, reaching in the air with a forefinger and a thumb to find the right one when it wouldn't come. His face was sallow, lined with creases thickest at the corners of a pair of restless eyes. Now and then he'd stop to catch his breath in short, exhausted gasps. His courtiers called him "weary." Certainly this last adventure must have taxed his strength. . . . Suppose he dies suddenly, there in Malta? . . . A refugee Sultan is a bomb timed to explode at an unknown hour. There are thousands of hot-spirited patriots in the Moslem world who could never be convinced that Britain had not lured this hostage into ambush to betray him.

Mohammed is an exile; and, so far, only one of all Islam's leaders has spoken out in protest against the action of the Angora Assembly. Abdullah, king of Transjordania, denies that this division of temporal and spiritual powers can ever be effected. The two, he says, are one and indivisible. Whoever plays the rôle of Caliph must have "power to protect his fold." And Mohammed's successor in Constantinople, shorn of all temporal authority, can never claim to rule the Moslem world.

Now Transjordania is the smallest of all Moslem nations, and Abdullah the newest of all Moslem kings; yet in this challenge from the desert the fugitive in Malta may find a crumb of comfort. Doubtless he asks himself if the mantle of the Prophet can be torn so easily from the shoulders of his Caliph. Doubtless he counts on India and Egypt to protest against this stripping of the Caliphate of its claims to temporal power. Islam is in turmoil; this deposition of Mohammed may have far-reaching interest for the Western world.

What is actually involved in the dispute about the Caliph's rôle in modern Islam—the dispute

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whether he is emperor as well as priest, or simply the spiritual leader of a church, with no more temporal power than the Pope in Rome? It has been many years since a Caliph actually ruled unchallenged in any part of Asia. Originally Islam's temporal and spiritual powers were truly one and indivisible. And that was because the Moslem missionary spread conversion with a sword. The first Mohammed, in the process of bringing western Asia around to his own way of thinking, built an empire almost incidentally. And every great reformer who succeeded him has followed the same course. The last of them was Ibn Saud. A hundred years ago Saud swept across the desert, preaching a puritan reformation, and building up a nation as he went along. He might have smashed his way into Africa and Europe as Mohammed's soldiers did, ten centuries before him. What stopped him was the invention of the cannon.

That was a century ago; and not since then has a Moslem leader ridden into battle in the double rôle of soldier-missionary. The old unity of sword and Bible lapsed. The political prestige of the Caliphs has been slipping. It is not only the fact that great stretches of the Moslem world like India and northern Africa have long since been wrested from the Turkish Empire by the Western powers; even inside his own domain, and even before the war, the political power of the Caliph was challenged by great masses of his subjects despite their reverence for him as the leader of their faith. Thus, despite a thousand years of Turkish domination, the Arabs of the desert revolted each time the Turk was whipped in Europe; the tribesmen of Mesopotamia showed effectively that they still scorned their masters as mere upstarts; the provinces of Yemen and the Hedjaz were up in arms, ten years before the war began. Even the Turks themselves rebelled against their Caliph. In 1908 a "Young Turk" revolution toppled the mighty Abdul Hamid from his throne.

And the war sped up this swift decline in temporal power. When it began, the Sultan exercised one of his most sacred prerogatives, and proclaimed a "Holy War." Four-fifths of Islam ignored his proclamation. Then came the peace—and, with it, the hacking off of Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Mespot from the old Empire. Nothing was left to the Caliph save Asia Minor and Stamboul itself. . . . Mustapha Kemal Pasha soon took the former off his hands; the latter fell to an Inter-Allied High Commission. . . . It is a literal fact that on the day the Angora Assembly voted a separation of the temporal and spiritual powers of the Caliph, that unhappy monarch had just one acre he could call his own—the little parkway of the Dolma-Bagtché palace. One acre; and one public ceremony. That was the "Selamlik," when he prayed each Friday in his palace mosque. Tourists from Liverpool and Dayton flocked there, once a week, to watch him. To Moslems in far-off corners of Asia he was still a symbol. That was all. In the realm of temporal power the Caliph of all Islam had become a matinée.

And so Mustapha Kemal Pasha robbed his spiritual leader of very little, when he decreed an end to the Caliph's power as a sovereign. Not even Syria and Palestine and Mespot would have the Sultan back today; they are none too happy with the French and British as their masters; but they want independence, not the Turk. . . . It is not an empire, with the Caliph as its sovereign, that is now at stake. The real question is whether this deposition of Mohammed IV will break the spiritual unity of Islam.

For four hundred years and more, ever since a Mohammed called the Conqueror planted the green banner of the Prophet on our side of the Bosphorus, Constantinople has been a Holy City for the Moslems. It has also been, from time to time, a Holy City for the Russians. And throughout the long struggle of Britain versus Russia, in the politics of the Near East, it has been a Holy City for one school of British diplomats.

That is one reason why British diplomacy has occasionally toyed with the idea of setting up a new Caliph in the desert. There is a family in Arabia known as Hussein. It claims descent from the Prophet himself. Its stronghold is Mecca, the holiest of all holies in the Moslem world. And with these two assets, the head of the house of Hussein has on more than one occasion attempted to assert himself as the true Caliph of all Islam. Frequently the British Foreign Office has thrown its influence behind him. Perhaps one reason is that it may seem safer, for an empire embracing a hundred million restless Moslems, to have the Caliphate shifted from a perilous spot like Constantinople, tangled up with European rivalries, to a quiet little hamlet in the wholly worthless desert.

British support of Hussein has never met with great success; but now that Mustapha Kemal Pasha has overturned one Caliph and replaced him with another, it is possible that Hussein will again reach out for recognition. He is more strategically situated, now, than he has been before; his oldest son is king of Transjordania; his second son rules Mespot. It seems unlikely that Hussein can actually win the allegience of the Moslem world, but quite possibly he will make the effort.

Hussein himself, despite his miles of desert, has little "temporal power"; and yet that question

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of "temporal power" would undoubtedly be his strongest issue. It may be true, as we have said, that when the National Assembly in Angora stripped the Caliphate of political sovereignty and left it solely a religious office, the loss—in terms of square miles and human souls—was quite inconsequential. Nevertheless, some myth of sovereignty has always clung to the Sultanate. No Moslems, save the Turks themselves, actually wanted a Turkish Sultan ruling over them. But perhaps all Moslems wanted to feel that he was capable of so ruling—to feel that in the spiritual overlord of Islam they had a Great Protector. And this they wanted—because the aggressive, conquering West rode down upon their pride, and humbled it.

And so—unrealistic though it may be, in terms of real authority—it is this question of "temporal power" that is likely to prove the most important of any new issues resulting from Mohammed's deposition. The rest is easier to prophesy. The old Sultan's day is done. . . . Islam will continue to look toward Constantinople as its capital. . . . But "temporal power" is another matter. Already it is reported that some of Kemal's own Cabinet ministers have resigned, in protest against the action of the Nationalist Assembly. The unknown quantity is the attitude of the larger Moslem countries like India and Egypt. Remember that it was not a Congress of all Islam that decreed this separation of church and state. That bit of modernism was the iconoclastic work of a single national assembly—rather parvenu, at that.

Often it is assumed that spiritually, at least, the world of Islam is indissolubly united. No doubt there are factors that hold it in close union: the institution of the Caliphate itself, the characteristic teachings of the Prophet, the pilgrimage to Mecca—above all, a common resentment against the aggression of the alien West. But there are forces of disunion, too. . . . Great gulfs in language, race and culture; the old quarrel of the Sunnites and the Shiites; the ambitions of the Sheiks of Mecca; the semi-independence of great fraternities like the Sennussiya. . . .

Since the war, thanks to the aggression of the Western powers, every active force in Islam has been making for a closer union. . . . But separation of church and state is unquestionably a good Moslem issue. There is irony in the fact that the first great post-war hero of the world of Islam, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, may also be the first to put the post-war unity of Islam to any sort of test.

CHARLES MERZ.

The Farmer and the Unseen Thing

IN a weird little tale by Ambrose Bierce the leading character is attacked by an unseen thing with which he grapples desperately for his life. This describes the present plight of the American farmer. From a world of apparent security mysterious forces have hurled themselves upon him. He now lies gasping, with the Unseen Thing gripping his throat. To test in part this figurative summary one need only recall the evidence brought to light by the last census: that between 1910 and 1920 the number of farms free from mortgage, of owned farms, decreased 20 percent; that the increase in the number of mortgaged farms was over 11 percent; that the amount of mortgage debt increased 132 percent, that the average debt per farm, of those reporting debts, increased 96 percent; that there was another definite shift in the tenure of farms away from ownership and toward tenancy. Only 61 percent of the farms are now operated by owners. It should be remembered that the last census was compiled at the crest of the post-war economic comedy, called prosperity. The facts which the census then revealed are already antiquated, for as great a change has taken place in the agricultural situation during the past three years as during the preceding ten years. Cases come to mind of farmers then on the road to moderate success who are now either insolvent or on the verge of it. And the census fails to tell the tale of the crop mortgage, an instrument that practically destroys the farmer's freedom of marketing. The Unseen Thing made its real attack after the census was taken, though it was nursed to maturity in the period preceding.

One glances at a recent copy of the Broomhall Corn Trade News, the leading English grain paper, and reads the following: "Sellers in North America, among whom are hundreds of thousands more or less needy, are bound to market a portion of their harvest to meet their current expenses, and the lower prices fall the greater will be the quantity which they will have to market in order to settle their standing charges." Such clinical observation is galling. One can be persuaded of a trace of European gloating over the necessities of the American farmer. But it is the bitter truth.

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The oracles have failed the farmer. Instead of returning prosperity he is facing a period of increasing hopelessness. To add insult to injury, he is forced to witness the ironic spectacle of reviving festivities for others; but for him—the crumbs and rags of failure. With the exception of cotton, which is enjoying a period of prosperity due to a world shortage, the opening of the new marketing season presents the same disastrous prospects that faced the farmers a year ago. In the case of some crops conditions are worse. Using the year 1913 as a basis, the volume of production this year of the twelve leading farm crops is 18 percent larger; the total value of the crops on the basis of July 1st prices, was 36 percent higher than the total value of the 1913 crops. The total purchasing power however, was only 77 percent as great as the total purchasing power of the 1913 crops. And since July 1st prices have generally declined, and estimates of yields in the main reduced, so that at present the purchasing power of the twelve leading farm crops would be approximately two-thirds as great as the smaller 1913 crops. In other words the farmers have to pay approximately 50 percent more in agricultural commodities in order to secure the same quantity of manufactured goods and general services as in 1913. With such markets, rare indeed is the farmer who can liquidate his indebtedness. Under such circumstances, is it rash to suggest that the great, free American farmer is facing a condition closely resembling peonage?

Economic law, that haven of safety for the individualistic mariner, seems to be temporarily suspended. What is more simple and obvious than the statement that when the relative price of a commodity falls the supply decreases? The farmer has listened to that repeatedly, and perhaps hopefully, since the big decline of 1920. But the acreage harvested for the twelve leading crops actually increased in 1921, and practically maintained this level in 1922, while reports from the country on sowing of winter crops intimate a still further increase for 1923. In actual production 1922 can boast the largest volume for the past ten years, with the two exceptions of 1915 and 1920. Canada seems to be even more iconoclastic of economic law. Since 1913 the leading field crop acreage has nearly doubled, influenced, as in this country, by the war. The important point however is that, in spite of the 1920 price collapse, acreages have continued to increase. Had it not been for unfavorable seeding conditions last spring Canada would have had a record acreage. There are no figures available as to the number of people engaged in producing the crops referred to, but it would be no surprise to learn that the depression in the cities has forced the marginal workers back to the country. The fundamental reasons, however, for this apparent setting at naught of economic law are the pressure of indebtedness and the eternal hope that springs in the breasts of farmers in common with other humans. Production, will eventually decrease, but not through smaller efforts on the part of the farmer. It will decrease through failure to replace machinery and other equipment, through decreased use of fertilizer, through insufficient cultivation and consequent deterioration of seed, spread of plant diseases and weeds. Ultimately economic law will be vindicated—but ultimately Gabriel will appear with his brass band. And incidentally this vindication will be at the expense of masses of people now living at the margin, whose food supplies will be shut off.

With economic law proving so treacherous, whither should the farmer turn for comfort? Before considering an avenue of escape it is pertinent to seek the causes of the affliction. And here the baffling mystery, the Unseen Thing—horrible because unseen and mysterious—comes into the story. What is the cause of the farmer's distress? Is it the European collape? So far as the farmer is concerned the need for his products is more intense than ever. Why, then, should commodities of less need increase in price while food products fall? This tendency was strikingly shown in a statement on British imports and exports published in Commerce Reports of December 5, 1921. During the first nine months of 1921 the imports of foodstuffs into Great Britain were valued at 113 percent more than 1913 values, on a volume about ten percent less; the exports of manufactured goods were 53 percent less in volume than in 1913, but values were 200 percent greater. The discrepancy in relative values since then has been increasing, for during the first six months of 1921 Europe still paid high prices for foodstuffs. Is this not a plain case of Europe profiting at the expense of the American farmer? More to the point is the relative cheapness of American wheat compared to the European wheat. All last year curious reports come in from Spain, Italy, Sweden, England and even from China describing the resentment of native wheat growers at the influx of cheap American wheat, forcing in some cases import duties to increase the price of native wheat. The European collapse may be responsible for the farmer's plight, but how? And what's the remedy?

And what of deflation? It is clear that a general reduction of prices is possible, but what economic purpose is served by everybody making a uniform and simultaneous cut in prices? Deflation is unthinkable except as a reduction of values, and

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a general reduction of values is impossible. Therefore deflation means a reduction in the values of certain groups of commodities. Groups of non-agricultural commodities have been reduced in price, but only agricultural products have suffered a substantial loss in values, in buying power. It is therefore proper to say that deflation has been almost entirely at the expense of agriculture. Some day the farmers will want to know where and why the power to deflate commodities resides. Like the European collapse, deflation, as an explanation of the farmer's difficulties, seems to be so obvious as to arouse suspicion that a still more fundamental cause must be sought.

To what extent is the emergency tariff responsible for present conditions? To quote from the London correspondence in the August 5th issue of the Modern Miller, a Chicago trade publication: "Trading in Australian flour is pleasing to the nation as a whole, as this prosperous dominion takes in return for its shipments of wheat and flour and other raw materials an equivalent, if not a surplus, proportion of goods manufactured in this country. Naturally this all works out in favor of the Australian mills as against the American mills. America has a tariff wall against products of this country to such an extent that there is practically no market for them in the United States, whereas her products of not only raw materials but manufactured articles are allowed free entry on these markets." Is there need to say more? Is the tariff at last the Unseen Thing? Probably not. The tariff is probably only one of the claws or one of the tentacles of the Unseen Thing.

The speculator in farm products looms large as one of the dragons to be slain. The long hunger of the speculator during the war when his vocation was unpopular found ample appeasement when government controls were removed. Every opportunity and power of superior organization, knowledge of markets, control of capital were used to smash farm prices. This was not limited merely to American speculators, or to speculators on the boards of trade. Our speculative system is too ramified to be delineated. The sources of power are hard to trace. The subtle, automatic interrelations of industry involve the entire structure in all major price movements. The farmer is convinced that the speculative marketing of farm products with its chaos, trickery and swindle must be destroyed. Cooperative marketing of wheat throughout the west is being energetically driven to success against tremendous obstacles by Mr. George C. Jewett, on the basis of the binding pool as developed by Mr. Aaron Sapiro. The pool idea is spreading rapidly to other commodities, and to practically every section of the country. The farmers, as never before, or rather for the first time, are crossing swords with the speculators of farm products. It is only a matter of time now before this field will be cleared of the obstructive accretions of rampant individualism.

But will the battle then be won? Can cooperative marketing force a satisfactory European settlement? Can it enforce rational policies of international trade? Can it compel all factors of industry to exert themselves to the same full measure in the production of commodities as does the farmer? Can it dethrone the wielders of autocratic economic power and enforce a wider distribution of economic successes and failures? Perhaps it can do these things and more. Time alone will tell. In the meantime the masses of agricultural producers are reeling under the succession of blows. A few are grasping vigorously at the Unseen Thing in an endeavor to shake it off. The many are dazed and uncertain of their defence because they cannot see from whence the blows are falling.

A. RICKLES.

David

Did you go this way? The alders trembled.
All of a sudden the katydids kept still.
Did you take the short cut through the dead tansy,
And no moon to help you down the steep hill?

Hours together the panther on the mountain
Has cried like a woman, sounding very near.
I went down the lane once to touch the warm oxen.
Did he go this way? No, not here.

The barn cat walked the wall along the cornfield,
Hunting like a shadow. The owl peered low.
I'm looking for the dark boy—Did he go this way?
The corn shocks rustled. The field breathed No.

The bats had gone. The horses never heard me
Coming through the pasture; they stamped in their sleep.
Did you leave a footprint here in the lowground?
No one could find it; the hardhack's deep.

Hardhack and boneset, brown-tipped snakeroot,
Paths that my feet know, help my sight!
Didn't you feel him? Did he go this way?
Who else would stir you in the middle of the night?

A black frost is harvesting; clips off the shagbarks;
Crumples up flowers with a crazy hand.

He went past me with a face like silver
And a word I could not understand.

MARIAN STORM.

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Reason and the "Fight Image"

I

THERE is a type of mental exercise much approved in the schools and colleges and on the public platform which might be called an exercise in bilateral opposition. It is the exercise in which one side is pitted against the other. The oppositional bilaterality may be represented in some such manner as this:

Yes	No
True	False
Wise	Foolish
Our side	Your side
We win	You lose

It is a rattling good exercise for the development of competitive enthusiasm. It is thrilling to the participants and to the hearers. In each side—whether among participants or hearers—it awakens a vigorous sense of the will to win. It exhibits the same exciting duality as a boxing match, where the purpose is to knock out one's opponent so effectively that there is no breath in him.

This has been the highly approved form of intellectual combat in the schools and colleges for many years. It has been supposed to be wonderfully stimulating to the wits, and to develop in boys and girls, who tend to be dogmatically one-sided, the power to see two sides to every question. There are a number of considerations, however, that give us pause. I suspect it needs no argument, really, to support the contention that these intellectual boxing matches do *not* develop in boys and girls (nor in adults) the power to look upon both sides of every question. That is a bit of pleasant rationalization with which we have long deceived ourselves. When we are really frank with ourselves, we know that the tendency is rather the other way. The side that has chosen the affirmative eagerly and stubbornly refuses to give full credit to the arguments that may be made for the other side. To be sure, it will find out ahead of time what those arguments are likely to be; but it will not meet them with a freely considering, openly weighing mind. It will meet them, rather, as one meets foes. The arguments are there—yes—but just wait until, by hook or crook, we can get a good whack at them! The type of thinking, in other words, is forensic. There is a case to defend *at all costs*. And the outcome is never an adjustment, never an incorporation of the truth that is on both sides; never a reciprocal elimination of error; never the *evolving* of a conclusion that is neither the one side nor the other. It is *either* this side *or* that. Hence there is, in this exercise, nothing of that quality most precious in all social thinking—the "will to rapprochement."

The second consideration that makes us pause is the suspicion that this forensic, bilateral view of truth is in reality a highly artificial, conventionalized view. It is a view which harks back to the days of feudal kings and war lords, and which still shows vigorous traces of itself in party government. It is a view which can have no kinship whatever with the later-developed scientific spirit. For, by the scientist, nature is not envisaged as an antagonist; nor are the questions with which he deals clearly divisible into two opposed sides. Nature, for him, is a problem; and the intellectual activity in which he rejoices is the power to seek out all the diverse aspects of this problem, to see the problem grow, to find certain guesses turn into proven errors, to find others develop into verifiable fact.

For the scientist, in short, all true thinking is an attendance upon and a working with a complex, *evolving* situation. It is a type of thinking in which the problem is never fully set at the beginning but grows as observation and experiment grow. The scientist, unlike the debater, never goes out by the selfsame door that in he went. He goes in exploring; and he comes out laden with the fruits of unexpected adventure. This means that the debate is an unreal or conventionalized leftover from an older, prescientific, militaristic civilization. Apparently, it has no proper place in a civilization dedicated to the careful, ramifying search for truth. It is a question, therefore, whether the debate ought not to be discontinued in our schools and colleges and on our public platforms; for apparently it tends to breed precisely that bilateral type of mind which is of least use and of most detriment to a social order based upon intelligent discussion and wise judgment.

Fundamental to the social training of the mind should be the development of a vivid sense that there is nothing cut and dried about the problem of life, nothing to be settled once and forever by a decision pro or con. Life is a process, a growing process; and clear thinking is nothing more nor less than effective activation in and through that process. For the static, mechanical, bilateral view, therefore, with its hard exclusions of affirmative and negative, and its pitiless knock-down blows; with its one-sided loyalties and its inevitably closed minds, we must, somehow, substitute ths organismic view and the organismic method. For almost every problem we tackle in life—whether in the sciences or in industry, politics, domestic or business life—is widely complex. It ramifies in all sorts of directions. It has many parts that interplay. The adjustment of one part changes the orientation of other parts. It is affected by factors that lie outside it; and it, in turn, affects these. Moreover, no real problem of life is ever the same at any two moments. It changes, grows, becomes more amenable or less. What we need is not debate, but discussion. Debate is narrowing; discussion is liberating. Debate is stationary; discussion is evolving. Debate is purely antagonistic; discussion is cooperative.

Modern education is moving very rapidly in the cooperative direction. The older individualistic relation between teacher and pupil, where the teacher asked the question and the pupil answered—or failed to answer and was marked zero—is rapidly being discarded. The more advanced schools are realizing the value of having students do things in groups. This is the wider significance of the "project" method. In an elementary grade, let us say, the project is of "food supply." The class of youngsters are taken to a truck farm; the children watch the vegetables being gathered from the fields, loaded on to wagons, and carried to the station. They are then taken to the docks,

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where they see how the freight cars are transported to lighters; then they are taken to where the lighters are unloaded and the perishable freight placed in refrigerating rooms; and so on.

When that class settles down again in the classroom, the teacher does not quiz each student upon what he has seen and mark him on his individual recitation. She gets the class as a whole to construct an account of what they have seen, each one contributing as he can, his contribution being accepted or rejected or modified by the rest. She may induce them to work out what they have seen with blocks and boxes and clay. In this process there will be mutual planning, mutual criticism; and the result, when it is finished, will therefore be a conjoint one.

Discussion is just such a conjoint project. It is give and take. It is the building up by the group of a judgment which no individual could himself have achieved. Or could he? The answer is no, because if the group discussion is a real one, there will inevitably be points of view developed which no single individual would have compassed, points of view which will be found to be pertinent, and which will, therefore, of necessity modify what would otherwise have been the individual's unaided conclusion. There is hardly a more necessary mental training than this. If properly conducted it has in it most of the requisite correctives for bad thinking. In the differences of viewpoint present, it has the corrective for individual bias, for malobservation, for one-sided generalization, for cocksureness. It has the corrective for that militaristic frame of mind which can see only two sides to a question—a right and a wrong. For a discussion inevitably brings out the many-sidedness of the considerations that affect any situation.

Now it is always a disastrous thing to throw out the baby with the bath; and it might be said that in roughly shouldering out debate from our schools, colleges and public platforms, we are at the same time casting out that peculiar zest in intellectual rivalry which has done so much to stimulate otherwise mentally sluggish beings to an alert search for reasons pro and con in matters about which they would not care a pin. But discussion, too, has its keen rivalries. One is a dull observer if he has not seen the flush of pleasure on the cheek of a boy or girl, when in the midst of the puzzlement of the matter at issue he has hit upon something that wins the approval of the rest. I have seen it time after time in the class room. I have seen it just as often when adults have discussed. No one, to be sure, has arisen and in magisterial tones announced: "You win!" Above all, no one has announced: "You win and the others lose!" The others have lost—just at that point in the game—but they have also won. For the puzzlement is now a little less of a puzzlement; the reasonable conclusion is a little nearer. Nor can the victor rest back with the flush on his cheek, for the argument moves on; and suddenly quick as a flash, someone else has said a brilliant, clarifying thing; and in the enthusiasm of the latest victory his little triumph is forgotten.

So he must keep alive. So they must all keep alive. They are all on the trail of something. Who will be cleverest? Who will catch sight first of the desired goal? And the zest of it is that no one knows what the goal is. When a debate is set there are the two goals, all fixed and stationary and in plain sight. The fun, in that case, is not in finding a goal—all together—but in trying to keep the other fellow from reaching his. It is a fierce competition in mental restraint. In a discussion, however—which grows on what it feeds upon—there is a glorious competition in cooperation. Each helps himself by most effectively helping the whole group; and each has the greatest pleasure in his own achievement precisely in the degree to which it gives the greatest pleasure to the group.

This is what all our social life is groaning and travailing after. It is mental Symbiosis, and it is as far removed from the forensic debate as two war lords banging against each other in mighty rage are removed from the scientific investigators who are making our world a little more tolerable place in which to live. For what our social life needs is cleverness in the art of *thinking together, evolving workable judgments together.* Where there is still no such art, or where such an art is only in embryo, we tend to look helplessly to the expert—or to our beloved Kaiser—or, in the schools, to the infallible textbook. (See the penetrating discussion of this in Follet's The New State; and the almost complete absence of any sense of its importance in most of the classic treatises on political science.)

Our social and political America of the past generations has been chiefly under the governance of lawyers. The lawyer-ideal has therefore dominated—in the schools, on the platform, in the legislative chambers, in political conflicts and of course in that scientifically most backward of our institutions, the court of law. Every boy, therefore, since he expected to become President, slept with an imagined Blackstone under his pillow and orated like an advocate. But the new America is falling—or rising—into other hands. The lawyer, like the man of the cloth, is sliding down the nether side of the wave of public confidence. (It is significant that a new type of lawyer—the adjustor and cooperator type—as likewise, here and there, a new type of minister—is arising.) The new lords of life are the business man, the engineer and the scientist. These are men who have no use for debate. They are handlers of situations, seekers after causes and effects, investigators, shapers of new ends and new means. They are setting the new pace for a citizenry which is growing a bit wearied of the old partisan futilities.

The schools and colleges, therefore, and the public platform would, apparently, be far more in line with the spirit of the day if they developed in their constituency the type of mind apt for the handling of many-sided, growing problems, the type of mind skilled, not in casuistry nor in bilateral antagonism but in the alert meeting of mind with mind to the end of cooperatively evolving, out of difficult, complex situations, the judgments necessary for sane and successful living.

II

Wisdom, as Dewey has repeatedly pointed out, is developed through reaction to specific situations. It is never born out of a vacuum. Such reactions to specific situations may be of two kinds: actual or imaginative. Education is in large measure an imaginative meeting of situations that in all probability one will later confront. Thus the boy or girl of twelve is imaginatively inducted into commercial enterprises, into transportation, into various citizenship activities, although years will pass before he will actually participate in these situations. Now the situations that education most largely uses are "fact" situations. "Citizens vote at the age of twenty-one—they vote every four years for a governor of the state, etc." The child

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imaginatively participates in this civic functioning by simply accepting the facts as facts and taking it for granted that when he grows to the requisite age, he will vote in the manner prescribed. There is another type of situation, however, of which education takes little account but of which later life is full. It is the "problematic" situation.

Let me illustrate by a quotation from a recent publication, The Public Conscience: A Case Book in Ethics, by George Clarke Cox. (Henry Holt, $3.00.)

> A bill was recently introduced into the Ohio Legislature providing that when an adult of sound mind has been fatally hurt, or is so ill that recovery is impossible, or is suffering extreme pain without hope of relief, his physician, if not a relative and if not interested in any way in the person's estate, may ask his patient in the presence of three witnesses if he is ready to die. If the answer is in the affirmative, then three other physicians are to be summoned in consultation, and if they agree that the case is hopeless they are to make arrangements to put the person out of pain with as little discomfort as possible.
>
> The bill did not pass. The project was bitterly opposed by the Independent, which expressed surprise that Charles Eliot Norton should approve of anything so crude, cruel and barbarous.

Here is a typical problematic situation. As each legislator faced it he was called upon to think through all the bewildering pros and cons. That it was not a simple case of right or wrong, truth or falsity, yea or nay, is evidenced by the fact that such intelligent persons as the editors of the Independent and Charles Eliot Norton could honestly differ. What made Norton and a minority of the legislators approve of the bill? What made the editors of the Independent and the majority of the legislators oppose the bill? What are the considerations of *real weight* that can be urged against it?

Now we might proceed, in the fashion of the traditional debate, and choose two sides—affirmative and negative. The affirmative is to do everything in its power to persuade us that the bill is a good one; the negative is to attempt to persuade us of exactly the opposite. It is obvious that the very essence of the situation would thereby be missed —which is, that here is a many-sided question, the answer to which is at best problematic, a question to be decided only by all of us sincerely trying to get the best light on it we can.

Suppose, however, instead of ranging two sides in debate, we throw the problem open for general discussion. At once the whole temper of the group changes. The group is not now divided into two partisan camps, each vigorously trying to win victory for its side, and caring comparatively little for the *truth* of the matter. It is now a group cooperatively seeking for light. One member of the group may have started with a firm conviction that the bill was justifiable; but as the discussion proceeds, that conviction begins to be shaken. Other members, starting with opposite convictions, may find their views being modified. In the end it may be decided that neither a decisive yes nor a decisive no is the answer. It may be decided that the end aimed at by the bill is a good one, but that the times are not yet ripe for its attainment. Or it may be decided that a modification of the bill is desirable.

In either case, or in any case, the discussion will have been an *evolving* one. It will not have been required that a position maintained at the beginning be (as in a debate) maintained to the end. *That is not what happens in these problematic situations in actual life.* In real life consistency is the virtue of fools—and party politicians. The wise man or woman comes to every truly problematic situation with a tentative mind. The process of reaching a decision is one of weighing diverse considerations—testing, rejecting this, accepting that, modifying the other. If the decision is reached individually, it is a process of inner discussion. If it is reached by a group it is a process of group dicussion.

Let me take another interesting example from Cox's book:

> The following advertisement has appeared from time to time in many reputable papers: 'A genuine steel engraving of General Washington will be sent postpaid to any address on receipt of twenty-five cents. The engraving is perfectly made on first quality paper and is suitable for framing. Address. . . .'
>
> When the advertiser opened his first mail after the insertion of the above advertisement, he found that more than $8,000 had been sent in. The people who had made the remittances soon received *one cent stamps* in return for their money.
>
> The advertiser on one occasion was indicted for fraudulent use of the mails. He was *acquitted* because his advertisement had not misrepresented the facts in any way.

Did he misrepresent the facts? The court decided no. If there was not literal misrepresentation, was there misrepresentation by subtle implication? What account should a court of law take of subtle implications? Were the people who sent their twenty-five cent pieces fools in the first instance; and is it the function of courts to protect fools against their folly? What effect would a decision for the advertiser tend to have upon the spirit of business enterprise? What effect would the opposite type of decision tend to have upon gullibles?

Here again is a rattling good chance for discussion, a chance which would be utterly lost if the matter were cast in the mold of a debate. For out of a discussion would grow all sorts of reflections upon business and law and human judgment in general that would be even more valuable than the mere right or wrong of the judge's decision.

The book from which I have quoted is an epoch making adventure in the field of public judgment. It is epoch making because it indicates a new method for the study of social thinking. It presents *cases,* i. e. specific situations, situations that are problematic. And it asks not that we decide pro or con on these cases, but that we *consider* them, *weigh* them in all their various aspects. It makes a plea, in short, for the substitution of discussion for debate. The book, to be sure, confines itself to cases that come within the purview of law. These, of course, are only a small part of the situations with which we meet in life. The project suggests to us the further enterprise of collecting problematic cases from everyday life that may be used as the basis of discussion from the elementary grades to adulthood.

Granting the social and the intellectual superiority of discussion over debate, it is not difficult to visualize a new type of public meeting for the consideration of urgent public questions. Instead of the announcement, with all its flavor of partisan bellicosity, of a *Debate* between two

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"intellectual giants" (to which we go, for the most part, already convinced, and quite prepared to cheer for our particular hero) there is the announcement that on such and such an evening ten persons, say, or twelve, some men, some women, in various ways distinguished, will publicly *discuss* a given question. The question is not stated in such a way as at once to elicit a yes or a no. It is presented rather as a problem needing clarification. On the evening set, the ten participators, seated together in full view of the audience—and preferably remaining seated—will begin to discuss very much as they please and quite informally. There will be no indication of sides to be taken. The only rule, if any, will be as to a maximum of time allowed any individual at any one time of speaking. Otherwise speakers will be permitted to speak as often as they wish or can get a chance.

It is obvious that such a public performance will proceed in a manner and to an issue far different than is ever possible in a debate. Each participant, no doubt, will try to be as brilliant as he or she can be. And why not? But no participant will be "lined up" at the outset; and it may easily turn out that the participant who keeps the inquiring mind, the continuously critical mind, is actually found to contribute far more than the participant who starts and ends with dogmatic assurance. Besides, the whole matter begins in uncertainty. No one yet knows how the lines are to be drawn. The discussion may take this direction or that. The problem and the solution *evolve* as the discussion goes on; and it may quite easily transpire that a speaker, during the course of the discussion, may find it not only necessary, but victoriously clarifying, to modify his point of view.

It is obvious, too, that the mind of an audience following such a discussion is being trained in a far more vital and helpful way than by the old knock-down Debate. The audience begin in expectancy, uncertainty, in a questioning frame of mind. As the discussion proceeds, they follow this line of reasoning and that. Since they have not come with any side to defend, they are free to "taste" the intrinsic values of the points made. They see a problem being progressively developed by joint endeavor. And if, somehow, out of the discussion a conclusion emerges, they get the triumphant sense of participating in an intellectual victory cooperatively achieved.

Here is a field for the development of individual and group judgment that has been almost entirely neglected in our educational system, both intra and extra scholastic. We have taught individuals how to line themselves up on one side or the other of a question and to fight the opponent to the tap of the gong. But we have scarcely touched even the borders of this other great enterprise of teaching individuals how to *weigh* problematic situations. Nor have we, save in the rarest instances, taught *groups* how to weigh situations cooperatively.

What we have done, in short, has been, in the main, to build up a "fight image" of the life of reason. But the true type of reason is not a fight. It is an exploration. More than that it is, when most effective, a cooperative exploration. It is this image of "cooperative exploration" that we now need to build up in our boys and girls and in our adult citizenship. The Debate is intellectually and socially demoralizing. Its place must be taken by a form of intellectual activity nearer to the realities and far more fertile for achievement.

H. A. Overstreet.

Notes

I

Too Perfect

ONE of my friends, a distinguished writer, said to me, "I saw the Six Characters in Search of an Author. I liked it very much. I read your review of it and I quite agreed. It's a remarkable play. But, do you know, I rather think it's too perfect."

Now there, I thought, is your perfect Anglo-Saxon. He is mistrusting Pirandello's play because it is done so well.

I said, "What do you mean? You don't mean that you want this play done less well because the matter in it is profound?"

"Well," the writer said, delighting me with a clear and honest head that no doubt partly accounts for his distinction, "I'm afraid that is just what I do mean. The stuff that Pirandello handles is too deep and difficult to come off so perfectly as it does. One feels that with such deep stuff one should fumble a little."

How jolly of him, I thought, to afford me such a pat example! The larger part of our race love to hear the engines creak, solemnly if possible, but creak. We believe that about all profundity there must be an audible and visible groaning and sweating. We believe in our hearts that a man who talks fast must be saying pretty light things. All that gods work is effortless and calm, Aeschylus said; but we think better of a little voice in a whirlwind. In art we admire and a moment after mistrust expertness and ease. And we think the one inevitable way of saying a thing does not really say the bottom of it; which might be true enough, if only we do not decide that leaving it fuddled and unexpressed is a deep way of saying it.

"But there," I said to my friend, with loving antagonism, "you are playing the Anglo-Saxon on Pirandello. I can see no reason for mistrusting him merely because he has an abundance of resource that finds the exact form that will say what he wants to say and shows no signs of effort in saying it."

"Nevertheless," he replied, happily obstinate, "racial or no, where the form seems so easily perfect I doubt a little the depth of the content."

There was, then, no reason to discuss the matter further. "Shall we," I proposed, "say this? Straightness may be perfectly expressed in the form of a stick. But if the outside of the stick is perfectly straight the inner must be crooked."

II.

Seventh Heaven

The volume of discussion and argument and letters to the Sunday papers about Seventh Heaven's possibility and truth only serves to show how vague the general conceptions of the dramatic art must be. In Seventh Heaven an orphan girl with an absinthe drinking sister is protected from the police by a sewer man, who is about to marry her when he is called to the war. Blinded, he comes back at last when everyone thinks he must be dead and just as everything becomes impossible for the beloved girl. Is this true to life? has been the argument, with many variations, between people who doubt the incidents and people who

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have been to Paris and seen exactly these very things happen so there now!

Obviously Seventh Heaven is an arrangement, as much as Dumas' Le Demi-Monde was, or The Two Orphans or East Lynne or any other of the old melodramas with street rats, rich uncles, heroes, attics, and the good curé busily understanding his children's hearts and humorously saving good-hearted but straying sinners. This play of Seventh Heaven is a pleasant reversion to a type less problematic than many latter day dramas, less intellectually and geographically and sociologically pretentious. It is good, honest theatre, with bells, vice, hardships, heroism and true love. One may shed tears and eat chocolates at such a play. The reactions it affords are exciting and bracing for the heart. They involve general and healthy theatrical moods and theatrical ways of feeding our lives. One of the pleasures of Seventh Heaven, if you find pleasure in it, which I did in a sort of little brown jug and Ben Bolt vein of sentiment, is the assurance that you are honestly in the midst of a game, a theatre game that is always comfortably separated from life, though it may in itself be vitally moving and warm.

The impulse to confuse the issue by listing incidents that have actually happened in Paris and therefore in the play are true to life, is encouraged by the convincingness of Miss Menken's acting. Her admirers want to believe that the moments she has to act would really happen and have happened, as if that had much to do with her truth. They want to believe that Miss Menken's heart breaks all over again every night when she weeps. Miss Menken has a real power, something poignant and intense and sincere; she has a touching mask; her emotion toward her part is deep and unforgettable. But the mere fact that she is as out of breath as she is at the end of some scenes is not the kind of thing in her acting that is to her credit, though some of her admirers mistake it for a guarantee of her sincerity. It merely means that with all her intensity of feeling and willingness to express at all costs the emotional truth of the character, Miss Menken is not yet wholly the mistress of her art.

Seventh Heaven is a game, an arrangement. Miss Menken is an actress. But what of that? We are not children. Under any theory of the theatre that, pushed to its conclusion, does not become nonsense, the art of the theatre, like every other art, is not life, it is art. Its material, whether important or trivial, is some form of life, seen or unseen, object or idea, but its final result is a work of art that, good or bad, is complete in itself.

III

Hospitality

Following the familiar pattern or tradition is not necessarily a bad thing in an art. It is after all what Molière did and Shakespeare and many others. Their genius renewed and revivified old worn forms in drama and created in old mediums a fresh and individual truth.

In Hospitality Mr. Leon Cunningham follows the old Broadway model. His play turns on a mother's love, the things she leaves unsaid, the erring and unseeing son, the unworthy wife, and the good girl, loving and retiring, who waits and serves and will find at last no doubt the reward of her devotion. But Mr. Cunningham has written so many convincing lines and has created so many moving and true reactions in his characters, that the wornness of his pattern begins to be forgotten. This American play chosen by the Equity Players is abundant in well-observed diction and well-observed and honestly set down facts of character and neighborhood. The direction of the play and the level of the acting in general is, in spite of some very unmanageable relics of old, tinsel days—the scene where the boy's beloved calls on his mother, for example —far above the average. Mr. Tom Powers, though often much too casual in his approach to acting as an art, brings to the part of the son his remarkable gift for flowing easily and persuasively into the feelings of the character at every dramatic moment. Mr. Claude Cooper has perfected for himself an astonishing craft of character-acting in the British style; he is amusing, delightful and unsatisfactory at the same time, penetrating, whimsical, cluttered and fragmentary. Without his skill or craft or control, Miss Povah in the despair and animal chaos of her last scene achieved a result that went further than anything of Mr. Cooper's. There is still in Miss Louise Closser Hale's art a hint of interruption, of working in bits. In this remarkably written rôle of the mother, which is at bottom a character part but is lifted out of that plane by the depth of its truth, by the revelation of its suppression, its irony and pathos, its hunger and grim passion, Miss Hale still retains something left over from her former character methods. But, though such carping seems ungrateful, to say this is only to imply that what Miss Hale does sets one to thinking of high standards indeed. There must be very little acting in New York or anywhere as good as this. Her performance has wit at times, and at times wit rising into poetic understanding. It delights the mind as well as touching the heart. It has about it the familiar, everyday and homely fact poignantly rendered, but at the same time rightly touched with the shadow of the tragic. It needs only the pressure of a certain hidden continuity of pathos to make it very fine art.

Only some time afterward, when all these excellencies, which with relation to the whole dramatic work are after all details, have begun to fade from one's brightest memory, is one reminded of the staleness of invention in the pattern of the play. The cloud of Broadway hangs, when everything is over and done, too close on Mr. Cunningham's horizon. But apart from that, and in its intention and honest eye and keen ear, Hospitality is one of the most encouraging signs we have had of late in our theatre.

Stark Young.

CORRESPONDENCE

Training for Gunmen?

SIR: Four gunmen engaged recently in a shooting affray with Columbus policemen; one policeman was killed, another wounded. Two of the gunmen were arrested, and one talked about their earlier activities. In the words of the Columbus State Journal (Dec. 2, 1922):

> Meeting of Mithoefer, Forbes and Cummins took place four months ago at coal fields in Fayette County, Pa. Mithoefer was chief deputy sheriff and Forbes worked for him on strike duty. Cummins applied for a job but was turned down. He secured work at another coal mine as guard, said Mithoefer, and later the three met again at Cleveland after the strike was over.

This incident prompts one to ask if strike duty as a deputy sheriff in Pennsylvania schools a man for a career of crime. If not, do the Pennsylvania coal operators or other officials in that state exercise all possible care to see that the men they hire to uphold the sanctity of the law protecting mine property are the most peaceable, upright and law-abiding citizens of their community?

L. F Crossman.

Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.

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Lloyd George

Mr. Lloyd George, by E. T. Raymond. New York: The George H. Doran Company. $3.00.

IT is still too early for anyone to be able to tell more than a fraction of the truth about Lloyd George. A great deal of excavation remains to be done, and the letters, stories, diaries of the people closest to him must come to light before we can have a full-length portrait of him, a portrait sure to be one of the most curious in history. But in the meantime Mr. Raymond can afford to be proud of the thorough and revealing job he has done with the material now at hand. It is a solid, capable piece of work, illuminated by a sober irony, unpretentious yet in many places really brilliant, restrained but not too cautious, friendly but not blind, or rather animated not so much by friendliness or unfriendliness as by a desire to understand.

Lloyd George is not easy to understand. If Mr. Raymond does not fully undertand him, he admits it, and offers clues to his character rather than a final analysis. When we think of Lloyd George we think of fireworks, of chameleons, of will o' the wisps, of all the world's worst or best demagogues, of the six senses of a cat, of a mercurially quick response to political temperatures rather than facts, of a wind machine whistling behind a darkened stage. Lloyd George is shrewd but not sagacious, merciless but soft; he can usually land on all fours when thrown out of the window, his one head contains the mind of a whole mob: this is about our usual superficial estimate of him. But he is vastly more complicated than this, and no brief summary will characterize him. For he is many people all at once, and has seemed a different person at many times of his career. If we are to understand him we must examine that career in some detail. This is what Mr. Raymond does, with a keen eye for its essential points.

Mr. Raymond calls Lloyd George "cottage bred." His beginnings were poor, but not humble. His family—though their chief luxury was "half an egg on Sundays"—enjoyed a sort of primacy in the Welsh mountain village where his father, William George, a schoolmaster, finally settled after "an odyssey of disdainful impracticability." The Georges counted themselves among the poor when they thought of the game-keepers and the oppressive squirearchy around them, but they had "some notion of the aspect of society from above." Lloyd George and his brother were the only boys at the village school to wear knickerbockers. Their uncle, David Lloyd, though a shoemaker, was looked up to as a local Nonconformist prophet, a figure of some dignity, even saintliness, a "stalwart and stately soul," stern, bitter, melancholy; whose "shop was the trysting place of all that withstood what were to him the twin powers of evil, the Established Church and the Tory Party." Lloyd George, though quite unlike his uncle, was much influenced by him. Here perhaps was the chief source of his early radicalism, but it was a lively, active radicalism, with no sombre strain in it. There has usually been something breezy even in his rebellions. If he was at first attracted to preaching as a profession, it is not necessary to infer from this, as Mr. Raymond says, "a strong spiritual bias." What "would tempt a country lad in England to the stage made a country lad in Wales 'pulpit-struck'," for preaching in Wales offered satisfaction to an "imperious Cymric sense of drama." But Lloyd George, more or less by a chance, sought that satisfaction in the law instead. Here he "rather specialized in defending poachers." Law broadened into politics, and at twenty-seven he was a member of Parliament.

Over those first years in the Commons (as a Liberal) we must pass rather quickly. Lloyd George, as a champion of Welsh Nationalism, showed his teeth, like "some fierce young Barbarian in Imperial Rome." At this time his face had "lost buoyancy and not yet attained repose;" it was "the face of a highly combative person, but hardly that of a happy warrior; this man, one would say, is as yet fighting the fight of an Ishmaelite or a Red Indian rather than that of a soldier, let alone a crusader." He defied party discipline. He was "carefully violent." His language was raw, flowery, pugnacious. He had a bitter class-feeling—or, more accurately, anti-class feeling—of which a fair instance is his attack on the clergy—as a whole—as "sanctified society prigs." One can never be sure of the exact degree of genuineness of Lloyd George's feelings at any time, but at this time he sincerely meant a great deal of what he said, and at this time there is most evidence of that "foundation of real sympathy with the obviously miserable, of genuine revolt against the more theatrical forms of oppression."

Was the Boer War a sufficiently theatrical piece of oppression to enlist his revolt? Whatever his real motives may have been, there is little evidence in his actions at the time, and less if one considers his later tendencies to follow, or rather precede the stream, that his opposition to the war was not sincere. He began slowly. His first speech "was simply an appeal to party feelings and class prejudice." This "irrelevant acidity" brought him a special unpopularity. But gradually he attained a wider view; in his speeches "the pedlar logic, if not entirely absent, was less crudely expressed"; his unpopularity deepened, widened and took on a certain dignity; until, on the Pro-Boer side, he "towered like Satan," and was, at the peace, "probably the most unpopular man in Great Britain." He never was a real pacifist. He had no particular horror of bloodshed, "but only a hatred of oppression: no condemnation of war, but a most emphatic condemnation of trespass." Perhaps the strain of those days had implanted in him a resolve never to repeat the hideous task of swimming upstream. At any rate, he never again showed such solid convictions, nor such high courage in standing by them.

The next years he spent in establishing, by his part in the educational dispute, a claim to be included in the next Liberal ministry, and in simultaneously weakening that claim by his unskilful advocacy of Free Trade, in which, though zealous, he was "constantly proving too much," for "he held a defensive brief, and in defence he rarely shines." "Something combative in him . . . found a certain cowardice in laissez-faire . . . A passion for interference, a love of direction for direction's sake, a faith in the virtue of 'doing something' made it fundamentally impossible for him to be a consistent free trader." No wonder that, when after the Liberal victory of 1906 he became President of the Board of Trade, the Tariff Reformers detected in him "a spiritual kinship," and the Conservatives, who admired him more than did his colleagues, were apparently trying to seduce him. For indeed Lloyd George seemed chastened as a Minister, and "displayed an engaging modesty, almost shyness, in piquant contrast with his audacity in opposition." It was some time before he "exposed the soles of his boots after the hardened Front Bench manner." The metal, shaped to a more definite purpose, seemed to have cooled.

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But only outwardly. In spite of his nominal subordination as Chancellor of the Exchequer to Asquith's "genius for abating fervour," Lloyd George was internally boiling with grandiose schemes. There is not much interest for Americans in the long story of the "People's Budget" and the veto by the Lords, and we need only stop to remark his peculiar enthusiasm for this measure, now taking the form of Jacobin denunciation of the nobility, now of wildly lyrical visions of the future; his ability to pass, in a flash, from an appeal on logical to one on emotional grounds. "His one great enemy," says Mr. Raymond, "was a cool and practical examination of his proposals," which were "not the work of a financier, great or small," but "the product of a considerable poet, working in the expensive medium of politics."

The war caught Lloyd George, as it did so many others, mentally unprepared. The man who had gained a reputation as a pacifist in the Boer War, and who was later in the world war one of those most responsible for pushing it through to victory, was at first on the side of delay, even neutrality. But he "has that type of character which, for good or ill, catches enthusiasm as men catch fevers," and it was not long before he began to speak of it as an "opportunity" for sacrifice, and to rejoice in "the glow and thrill of a great movement for liberty." Those words have a personal ring, and indeed "what a baby is to a flighty but sound-hearted woman the Great War was to Mr. Lloyd George. It gave him something concrete and despotic to absorb an energy which so far had exceeded both his vision and his judgment." His instinct was sound: this was his real chance. The war made him great—"because it gave him much scope for action, and very little occasion for thought." It gave release to the endless supply of faith in himself. And at this time the fact of that faith "was a political factor of the highest importance." Lloyd George honestly believed that he, and he alone, could save the country. His first steps toward the salvation were as Minister of Munitions. Here his defects were virtues: courage and energy mattered, the cost of their exercise unrestrained by thought did not matter. "What I admire here" (Mr. Raymond is quoting Dr. Johnson) "is the total defiance of expense." But eventually this job settled into a routine which took care of its own detail, and Lloyd George again found himself with an unemployed surplus of energy. He became restless and unhappy. The War Office seemed for a while a door to something greater. Even in his pacifist Boer-War days military strategy fascinated him. It fascinated him far more now. He believed the war could be won by operations in the East. But military authorities whom he thought should have obeyed him did not agree. Sir William Robertson baulked him, was preventing him from winning the war. But the premier supported Robertson. Therefore Asquith was the final obstacle. He must go. The story of how he went is one of ugly intrigue that, to speak mildly, does little credit to Lloyd George.

He was at last where he wanted to be. It was the power rather than the title that he craved. How wisely he used that power, whether the war was won by his leadership or in spite of it—Mr. Raymond is sure the former is true— is still a matter of controversy, though one will agree with him that Lloyd George's premiership "acted like a brass band on tired troops." For this more recent and familiar history we must refer the reader to Mr. Raymond's clear and full account, stopping only to note how Lloyd George, who began as an "Easterner" and much later talked about the "futility" of "hammering" on the Western front, was in between times an ardent admirer of Nivelle, whose disastrous plans he supported perhaps because Nivelle seemed to him "that most welcome of all miracles, a scientific soldier without misgivings."

The interesting and complicated story of Lloyd George's part in the Versailles Treaty is overshadowed by his enormous and hideous mistake—the election of 1918, which more than any other one fact helped to make the peace so bad that the world has since been kept busy devising retreats from it. The election cries of "Hang the Kaiser" and "Make Germany pay," while Lloyd George was not directly responsible for them, had his approval at the time. He is "a democrat who sometimes has to trust the people, but who would much rather not," and on this occasion, since what he really wanted was "a House of Commons reflecting the country's views on one subject only—himself," he did not trust the people, but loaded in his favor all the dice he could get his hands on. Lloyd George undoubtedly has courage of a kind, but this election seems to have been one of those moments—they were frequent—when "he was sufficiently afraid of the people to humor it to its own ultimate disadvantage." In that disadvantage he has lately acquired a personal share.

It is characteristic of him that the peace, which fell considerably short of those election promises, he could call "a great Peace," "a righteous Peace," and "a Peace charged with hope," and that soon after he should be employing all his ingenuity in deflating it, and in trying to unload from it many of those things other than hope with which it turned out to be charged.

In spite of all his mistakes and weaknesses, Mr. Raymond claims for Lloyd George a considerable degree of greatness. That is an arguable question, and it will long continue to be argued. His energy, his zest, his ability to throw all of himself into what he was doing, his supreme gift for improvisation, his "almost morbid fertility in expedient" helped to win a war which other men of more judgment but less gusto might have lost. These last years show him at his best, even if they were spent repairing his own mistakes. The talents he possesses for repair seem to desert him at the time of creation. Creation requires some foundation of general principle, and a long view of the future. Lloyd George, though one of the best guessers in history, is a short-term guesser. Like an Indian, he can unerringly pick his way mile by mile according to the moss on the trees through political country for which the average English statesman requires a map. Mr. Keynes has told us how he seemed to have a sixth sense not granted to other people. But it is hardly a sense of general direction. And he forgets what ground he has just covered. If "he seldom takes long views of the future, he is even less incommoded by memories of his past." No political figure, perhaps, has ever been more light-heartedly inconsistent. He has been both right and wrong on the same subject oftener than almost anyone in history. He combines a "disarming way of confessing minor limitations" with the unenviable record of never having admitted himself to be genuinely mistaken. Yet at bottom he is "stubbornly consistent." "He has changed sides and opinions, but he has never changed himself." We cannot charge him with insincerity: the word or its opposite do not apply to him.

He believes in himself, he is true to himself, but what a complicated, divided, iridescent self. "He possesses the strangest capacity for dividing his life, his mind, and his

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very soul into water-tight compartments." His mind is a houseful of opposites, a "strange mingling of high impulse with small calculation," in which are found side by side "the faith in money, the disregard for money, the abiding perception of human reality, the cynical understanding of human weakness; the sure sense of how to touch the hero in the commonest man, the not less certain divination of the right word to address on occasion to the greatest common meanness of humanity; the pity for the poor, the distrust of the poor. . . ."

With all Lloyd George's sensitiveness to his surroundings has gone a ruthless independence which has been his chief strength. He is not an Englishman. He has never been enmeshed in that web woven of the past, of friendships, memories, scruples, which binds Englishmen as well as animates them. His progress, unfettered by any dear background of loyalties and allegiances, could be ruthless. "All others cared, though they might not admit it, for something besides victory,—for their clubs, their dinners, their friends, the British constitution, the three tailors of Tooley-Street, the opinion of the regiment, their social clique, their political tea party, or what not . . . All other politicians, with their traditions, interests and affiliations, were to some extent divided in their aims and energies, and supreme power came naturally in due course to the lonely man of all weapons, few restraints, and one idea."

That one idea, one cannot avoid concluding, was, most of the time, himself.

ROBERT LITTELL.

Dollar Art

Distinguished American Artists: Robert Henri and Childe Hassam, compiled by Nathaniel Pousette-Dart. New York: The Frederick A. Stokes Company. $1.00 each.

DISTINGUISHED American Artists, a new series of small monographs designed for popular consumption, has little to recommend it. The introductory volumes are devoted to Robert Henri and Childe Hassam, both safe and established painters with wide audiences; but I doubt if their most indiscriminate advocates will overlook the cheapness and haste of the present edition. The illustrations are dim and mediocre; the explanatory comment worse than useless. The editor, writing of Henri, commits himself to such uncritical flattery as the following: "Henri is seeking to eliminate the element of time . . . to hint the mysteries of the fourth dimension; he is alive to what Clive Bell calls 'significant form'; he mixes brains and paint . . . before he touches brush to canvas the picture is painted; he is egoist, idealist and realist!" I have discovered that the secret of Hassam's art lies in his Puritanism; "that his most daring effort was to paint the Flags—no one had ever painted flags before," and "only a Puritan could have painted flags as he did."

Henri has passed his prime. He began with Bouguereau and ended with Manet. Some years ago he was a powerful factor in American art, a man of radical convictions, a stimulus to students, and a teacher of eminence; today, disenthroned by Modernism, his work seems shallow and perfunctory. Never a great artist, he was, at least, a sincere and gifted one, and he will be remembered for his enthusiastic fight for realism. He called attention to objectivity at a most depressing period, and painted with freedom, gusto and a certain semblance of form. Deficient in imagination, he has never achieved a true realism—the extension of form recessively into three dimensions by means of superimposed planes—and recognizing his limitations, he has concentrated his efforts on isolated appearances. He is enamored of types; he has wandered in many lands in search of striking models; he is absorbed in costumes, smiles and exotic gestures. His studies of "character" and "humanity" are not greatly removed from anecdotal records disguised beneath the captivating freedom of his technical skill. Divest his pictures of the ancillary appeal of curious literary illustration, and you will find that he is neither a draughtsman nor a composer. Henri is the spirited exponent of the picturesque.

As a typical specimen of the routine, perfected method which led to the anarchy of the truly modern artists, we have Childe Hassam, the best-seller of American Impressionism. Conscious that the values of natural light, when literally reproduced, lose their original life and brilliancy in an envelope of murky pigment, he set out, in the first place, to enliven his canvases by introducing large amounts of complementary tints into the shadows of the colored objects. This was followed by the more advanced step of indicating, not only the shadows, but also the local colors, by facets of pure pigment varying in tint and hue, which, when blended by the eye at a short distance, gave the idea of the vibrant animation of nature itself. Hassam learned the method in France; it became popular and profitable; and he has gone on repeating it with amazing productivity ever since. Impressionism is dead now—the movement flourished for more than forty years and brought forth nothing beyond a number of real and convincing representations of sunlight. Hassam's work is no exception: it is competent, business-like and assured, but not artistic. Impressionism has but little value in black-and-white reproduction; it is a brilliant colored mask pulled over nature to hide bad drawing, the most ingenious ever invented. Unfortunately the illustrations in the monograph are not printed in color.

THOMAS CRAVEN.

Sharing Profits with Employees

Sharing Profits With Employees, by James A. Bowie. New York: Pitman and Sons. $4.00.

THIS volume continues the infuriating tradition of English books on economic subjects, being on the whole better written, better informed, more tolerant, more balanced, than American books. Neither the cheerio soap selling economics, nor the Civic Federation hymns of hate—both of which devastate our presses—seem to come out of the tight little island at all. Or if they come, they are not exported.

Mr. Bowie is lecturer in economics in the College of Technology, Manchester. He surveys the field of profit-sharing in Great Britain with thoroughness and acumen. When you lay the book down you may not altogether agree with its conclusions, but you have learned something. You take a 3x5 card and note thereon, "Profit-sharing, see Bowie***"—the three stars meaning that the reference is the best that you have found to date.

Profits as the tenderest spot in the current economic struggle are first discussed. Labor's view of profits is represented by a smashing quotation from the Labour Herald; the employer's view by a very fair statement of our old

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friend "economic incentives." The author then gets down to cases. He first reviews the history of profit-sharing per se where the employee simply receives a cash bonus out of profits in the good years. This method he concludes to be without merit so far as providing any solution to the industrial problem is concerned. He finds that over half of such schemes have already been abandoned. Then he goes on to "co-partnership"—meaning that the employee becomes a genuine stockholder in the corporation, with a certificate, voting privileges and a definite responsibility as well as right to dividends and profits. The history of this side of the case is admirably set forth. Here Mr. Bowie finds hope, if:

(1) There is entire freedom of entry and exit for the employee. He must have the right to buy in or sell out his shares as he chooses.

(2) If the shares are paid for by the workers. "Humanity does not value what it receives gratis, but only what it earns or buys."

(3) If the employee becomes a preferred shareholder as against the ordinary shareholder.

(4) If the worker can be educated to accept losses (on his shares) in the bad years, as well as profits in the good years.

(5) If the worker can be educated through his shareholding to feel a genuine responsibility in the conduct of the business—to think of it as "his business."

Mr. Bowie deals frankly with the obvious criticisms from the Left to any such program. To the charge that profit-sharing tends to break down the solidarity of labor, to take the edge off the class struggle, and to weaken trade unionism, he replies soundly that trade unionism is not an end, but a means to an end, which, to date, has not succeeded in ameliorating the lot of the worker to any vast degree. Here is another means to the same end which may prove a better and a quicker reagent. It may, but to me the probabilities, particularly the psychological probabilities, seem all against profit-sharing as the door to the industrial millennium. Our captains of industry, it seems to me, function in the present system because of the incentive of almost limitless power and control which is held out to them. If you tunnel into that power and control with profit-sharing arrangements you are likely to prick the incentive nerve at the same time. Mr. Bowie's conception of corporation managers and officers working furiously to make profits for their employees, and ultimately to be at the mercy of their employees at stockholders' meetings, somehow does not strike me as psychologically sound. He is trying to keep the cake of laissez-faire while he eats it with profit-sharing. Why not have straight democratic control and be done with it?

STUART CHASE.

The Spirit of Italy

Immortal Italy, by Edgar A. Mowrer. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $3.50.

THE weakest point of Mr. Mowrer's volume is its title. It suggests the venerable Robert Underwood Johnson or the literary efforts of wartime information bureaus. The suggestion is reinforced by the coat of arms of the House of Savoy on the cover. But the courage of those who overcome the prejudice thus aroused and read the book is well rewarded. Immortal Italy is, on the whole, excellent journalism, with a lapse or two into the commonplace (in an otherwise good enumeration of Italian cities one finds, "Venice, of course, is unique") compensated for by occasional flights to the level of the high class essay, and by felicitous bits such as, "Many Americans learn through sojourn in Italy that all their lives they have been starving for art and never knew it . . . *They begin to take art seriously, sans peur et sans reproche.*" While nowhere particularly profound (he does not pretend to be) Mr. Mowrer, as an observer, is discriminating and sympathetic. Above all, he is never dull, and never provincial. One is delighted to find an American newspaper correspondent of, presumably, pure American stock who is such a good European. Mr. Mowrer not only knows Italy—he also feels Italy and the Italian spirit with a clearness and intensity that only intelligent love can bestow. One gets the impression that not only does Mr. Mowrer like Italians, but also that Italians like him. He sees the shortcomings of the Italian character—above all, its tendency toward word-intoxication—only too clearly ("we Italians don't make revolutions, we make speeches," said Signor Nitti) yet he feels sure that with its absolute toleration of variety and dissent, its utter lack of cant, its fundamental instinct for beauty and all the true values of life, the Italian spirit is one of the hopes of the world. A few more Americans of Mr. Mowrer's stamp to interpret things European to their fellow-countrymen would not be wasted.

EUGENE S. BAGGER.

Note

The Western Question in Greece and Turkey, by Arnold J. Toynbee (published in England by Constable), and reviewed in our issue of December 6th, will shortly be published by the Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.

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